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SUBJECT: TAHA01: NICARAGUA'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO RELIEF EFFORTS IN HAITI

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) The Nicaraguan Army, civil society, and private industry have made important contributions to the relief efforts in Haiti. The Army has sent three deployments of soldiers to Haiti since January 14 to deliver foodstuffs and medical supplies, provide a variety of health and medical treatment, and conduct search-and-rescue operations. The Nicaraguan Red Cross, in cooperation with civil society organizations, youth groups, and performing artists, has organized activities throughout Nicaragua to raise money. The private sector has also donated food and raised money to support the relief effort. Despite President Daniel Ortega's appalling comments criticizing U.S. relief efforts in Haiti, Nicaraguans in general have stepped up to the plate to provide assistance there.

NICA ARMY CONTRIBUTES TO RELIEF EFFORT IN HAITI

¶2. (U) The Nicaraguan Army has deployed more than 40 soldiers, including military doctors, nurses, and other medical specialists, to deliver foodstuffs and medical supplies, provide a variety of health and medical treatment, and conduct search and rescue missions. On January 14, the first deployment of 34 soldiers arrived in Haiti. They delivered 3 metric tons of foodstuffs and conducted search and rescue operations. On January 19, a second deployment of 2 Nicaraguan Army AN-26 military aircraft with 8 Army medical personnel (1 surgeon, 1 orthopedist, 2 general medicine doctors and 4 nurses) delivered 6 additional tons of foodstuffs and 9 metric tons of medical supplies (Ref A).

¶3. (U) On January 26, a third deployment of soldiers arrived in Haiti to provide medical treatment and conduct search and rescue operations, including 1 surgeon, 1 orthopedist, 1 epidemiologist, 1 general medicine doctor, 2 nurses, and 2 cast technicians. International and local media reported that a Nicaraguan Army search-and-rescue team pulled 6 people from collapsed buildings in Port-au-Prince on January 26. On February 3, a fourth deployment of 1 Nicaraguan Army military aircraft with new troops arrived in Haiti to deliver foodstuffs and medical supplies. These soldiers were trained and equipped by the United States with Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative (GPOI) funding.

NICARAGUAN RED CROSS LEADS CIVIL SOCIETY EFFORTS

¶4. (U) The Nicaraguan Red Cross, in cooperation with civil society organizations, youth groups and performing artists, has organized activities to raise money to support the relief effort. On January 22, the Nicaraguan Red Cross and Radio "La Costenisima" of Bluefields, a city in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region (RAAS), organized a radio telethon in support of Haiti. On January 23, a youth group called "Nicaraguan Youth Helping Haiti" collected monetary donations throughout Managua. On that same day, 30 Nicaraguan artists participated in a telethon in Managua to raise money. The artists solicited donations by phone and also played music, sang songs, danced, and read poetry. During a separate telethon in Esteli, a city in northern Nicaragua, on January 30, the Nicaraguan Red Cross of Esteli and the Lions Club raised \$3,300. All proceeds will be delivered to the International Red Cross' Haiti Earthquake Fund.

¶5. (U) Other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are also helping Haiti. Representatives of the Autonomous Movement of Women (MAM), an orgar

INDUSTRY ALSO HELPS

¶6. (U) The private sector has also donated food and raised money to support the relief effort. The National Association of Sugar Producers donated 45.2 metric tons of sugar. Innovative Industries, the owner of Glacial Bottled Water and Ice, provided 100 boxes of 1.5 liters of bottled water to the Nicaraguan Army that were delivered in Haiti. Grupo Vision, a company that is a distributor of General Motors vehicles and has the franchise rights to Quiznos, raised money by organizing raffles to give away food, beverages, and a motorcycle. Claro Enitel, the operator of Nicaragua's fixed line phone service and the largest cellular phone service provider in Nicaragua, has so far raised approximately \$3,000 by sending text messages to its customers to support Haiti, and working with students from Thomas More University to solicit donations at two shopping malls. All proceeds collected by Claro Enitel will be donated to the Nicaraguan Red Cross for the

International Red Cross' Haiti Earthquake Fund. COPERCO, a construction company, donated \$1,000 to an Italian NGO called "One Roof for My Country" to help rebuild homes for Haitian families.

COMMENT

17. (SBU) Despite President Daniel Ortega's appalling comments criticizing U.S. relief efforts in Haiti (Ref A), Nicaraguans in general have stepped up to then plate to support the relief effort there. Several Nicaraguans have stated that it is important to support Haiti not only for humanitarian reasons, but also because they have firsthand experience dealing with hardships after natural disasters, such as the earthquake in 1972, Hurricane Mitch in 1998, and Hurricane Felix in 2007.
CALLAHAN